

December 2007 and January 2008 CIRCULATION: 1074

All proceeds from advertisements after printing costs go to the WAMBOIN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, which started the Whisper in 1981 and continues to own it. This Newsletter is distributed to all RMBs in Wamboin, Bywong, Clare, and Yalana at the beginning of each month, except January. Editor is Ned Noel, 17 Reedy Creek Place, Wamboin, 2620, phone 6238-3484. Contributions which readers may wish to make will be appreciated, and should be submitted to by email to <u>nednoel@optusnet.com.au</u> or dropped into his mailbox at 17 Reedy Creek Place. The deadline for the next issue is always the last Sunday of the month, 7 pm, so for the February 2007 Whisper the deadline is Sunday, November 25, 2007, 7:00 pm. The Whisper always goes to deliverers by the first Saturday of the new month.

LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCIES Fire/Police/Ambulance - Dial 000 All Hours Queanbeyan Police 6298-0599 Wamboin Fire Brigade Info Centre 6238-3396 Ambulance Bookings 131233

WAMBOIN FACILITIES AND CONTACTS

Wamboin Community Assn	Helen Montesin	President	6238-3208
Bywong Community Assn	Judith Miller	President	6236-9321.
Fire Brigade	Cliff Spong	Captain	040-999-1340 bh 6236 9220 ah
Wamboin Playgroup	Leanne Quick	Convener	6238 3435
Sutton School Playgroup	Laura Taylor	Convernor	62369662
Landcare	Roger Good	President	6236-9048
Community Nurse	Heather Morrison	Bungendore	6238-1333
Breastfeeding Assoc.	Belinda Dennis	Community Educator	6236 9979
Emergency Services	NSW Call Centre	Staff	132-500
Emergency Services Admin	Colin Brown	Controller	6238-1067
Justice of the Peace	Peter Greenwood	JP	6238-3358
Justice of the Peace	Keith France	JP	6238-3596
Justice of the Peace	Margaret Fletcher	JP	6238-1211
Wamboin Scout Group	Peter Harrison	Contact Person	6238-3525
Wamboin Guides	Rosemary Riley	Contact Person	6241-6565
Wamboin Pony Club	Maureen Purdie	Contact Person	6238-3343
Gearys Gap Pony Club	Leigh-Anne Barlow	Secretary	6238-3376
Play Group	Leanne Quick	Convenor	6238-3435
Hall Bookings	Joan Mason	Bookings	6238-3258
Church, Anglican	Robyn Robertson	Warden	6238-3202
Christian Prayer Group	Steve & Imelda Taylor	Contacts	6238-3220
Golf	Peter Greenwood	Golfer	6238-3358
Injured Wildlife	Wildcare	Helpline	6299-1966
WW02 Group	Claire Ayling	Convener	6238-3347
Lake George Day VIEW Club	Pauline Segeri	President	6238-1996

THE YOUNG WAMBOIN ENTREPRENEURS

Ashleigh Caird, babysitting	6238 0746.
Deanne Brucic, babysitting & petsitting	6238-1884
Ellen Smith, petsitting (experienced with horses)	6238-3115
Fiona Skea, babysitting	6238-3290
Rebecca Purdie, petsitting	6238-3343
Frank Deveson, bicycle maintenance	6238-3294
John Brennan, babysitting and petsitting	6238 3472
Elena Sutcliffe, petsitting and babysitting	6238-3228
Gabrielle Simpkin & Nicolette Neveu-Abramczuk, petsitting	6238-3600
Matilda Whitney, pet care	6238 3059

Macs Reef Tip Hours 7:30 am to 5:00 pm Fri-Sat-Sun-Mon (to 7 pm Sat - Sun in daylight saving time) closed Tue-Wed-Thurs

Wamboin Community Association Presidents Paragraphs

Christmas Carols – The annual community Carols Evening will be held on 21st December. There will be a vibrant new format this year which encompasses the theme of 'Family, Friends and Community'. See the notice later in the Whisper. Telstra – I was most impressed with the Telstra stall at the November markets. The staff were all knowledgeable and

Telstra – I was most impressed with the Telstra stall at the November markets. The staff were all knowledgeable and very helpful. As well as demonstrating the various Next G phones at the hall, they conducted visits to properties to see which phones best suited the location. They have agreed to come back to the December markets for those people who didn't get to the November markets. In addition to the Next G phones, they will be bringing out a range of accessories including aerials. If you need to upgrade your CDMA phone, but can't make it to the markets or want to upgrade sooner, the Telstra shop in Queanbeyan will be able to help you out. It is under new management and, as shown at the markets, Neil, Anne and their staff are keen to provide a good service.

Wamboin Community Association – Unfortunately, Peter Bascomb (General Manager of Palerang Council) couldn't attend the November WCA meeting. He is rescheduled for the next meeting on 19th February 2008. Instead of the usual meeting in December, the WCA will be having an end of year celebratory dinner at the Royal Hotel in Bungendore on 18th December at 7:30pm. If you would like to attend, RSVP to Helen Montesin (ph: 6238 3208) before 8th December.

Wamboin Produce Markets – The final market for the year will be on 15^{th} **December** from 9:00am till noon. The Christmas markets are always a real treasure trove of delights for the festive season. Telstra will be coming out again to demonstrate a range of Next G handsets and accessories to help residents (particularly those with CDMA phones) determine the best Next G options for the area. The January markets will be on 19^{th} January 2008.

New Residents – If you are new to Wamboin, or know someone who is, Lofty Mason has collated a "Meet and Greet" package. It contains useful information about Wamboin, including a map. It has details of the diverse range of community groups in the area. Please contact him on 6238 3258 for a copy.

WCA Electronic Noticeboard – The noticeboard is a great way to keep up with issues of community interest and I encourage everybody to subscribe. To subscribe, simply send an email message (doesn't need any subject or content) to Wamboin Noticeboard-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.au.

Calendar of events – If you have any events that you would like included in February's Whisper (there is no January Whisper), please contact John van der Straaten (ph: 6238 3590).

I hope you all have a happy and safe Christmas and all the very best for 2008.

-- Helen Montesin (helen.montesin@canberra.edu.au)



A WAMBOIN CHRISTMAS 21 DECEMBER 2007 – 7.00pm

At the Community Hall Bingley Way An event for FAMILY FRIENDS COMMUNITY Everyone is invited to join in:

The latest Christmas hits from Honey Muse Singing the Traditional Carols

A Christmas Story presented by the children of Wamboin

Young people who wish to participate please come to a practice at the Community Hall on Monday 17 December at 7.15 pm

There will be a decorated Giving Tree for gifts which will be distributed

to needy children by the Salvation Army

Appearance of Father Christmas

Refreshments – sausage sizzle

All proceeds to the Salvation Army

Bywong Community News

Compiled by Morag and Guy Cotsell

Christmas Drinks and Wine Tasting: Still not too late to drop in for a drink or a free taste of Gidgee wines on Saturday 8 December! Everyone who lives locally is welcome. Drop in on the way home and bring a plate if you can - we shall be there between 6pm and 8pm. Gidgee can supply any of their vintages on order and deliver direct to you. The venue is the Community Hall in Birriwa Road, off Macs Reef Road.

Further Donations: At its last meeting the Community executive decided to make a further donation to the Wamboini Fire Brigade. This will be presented at the Christmas drinks.

Speakers for 2008: The Community promises a stimulating programme of guest speakers during the coming year. Dates are still to be settled, but expect to learn about local hydrology, climate change, local history and bushfire preparedness.

Meeting (some of) the candidates: Ten days before the election Bywong and Wamboin residents met at Bywong Hall to hear statements from five of the candidates for the Federal seat of Hume, which now takes in Bywong and Wamboin. The event was jointly sponsored by Bywong Community and the Wamboin Community Association. The sitting member Alby Shulz sent an apology and did not attend.

Approximately 40 residents of Bywong and Wamboin attended a 'Meet the candidates for the electorate of Hume' night at the Community Hall in Bywong. Question time was lively, as members posed some confronting questions to the various candidates. Probably the topic of most interest to members of the audience from the number and depth of the questions was climate change. Bywong President Judith Miller introduced the candidates and Helen Montesin, President of Wamboin Community Association, chaired the event and kept the questions and answers to the point and to time. Audience members, who enjoyed supper with the candidates after the formal proceedings, agreed that the evening constituted another worthwhile example of cooperations between our two neighbouring community groups.

CBC HOME LOANS OVER 35 LENDERS TO CHOOSE FROM OWNER OCCUPIED OR INVESTMENT RURAL / RURAL RESIDENTIAL FAST APPROVALS – COMPETITIVE RATES LO DOC FOR SELF EMPLOYED EXPERIENCED STAFF YOUR LOCAL LENDER AND PROUD SPONSOR OF THE BUNGENDORE MUDCHOOKS RFC PHONE: 6162 1132.



Capital Region Technology and Computer Support

Discuss your needs with someone who has over twenty years of IT experience Know what is likely to be achieved and the cost Repairs and custom built computers Hardware and software support Reduced rates will be considered for community groups and the disabled

How The Whisper Gets From the PrinterTo Your Mailbox

The 40 people below each spend time each month to make sure that Wamboin and Bywong residents own and receive a free community newspaper. If your deliverer has been on the job for a long time and you have a bit of time you could spare, think about offering to take over the job. If you already have too many tasks in your month, every now and then give your volunteer paperwoman/man/boy/girl a thank you.

160 CO-ORDINATE	ED BY HELEN MONTESIN: Ph	6238 3208			
Dean Evans	Nrtn Area frm Campbl West	18	Bill Owen Cooper Ro	d.	26
Helen Montesin	Fernloff Rd	33	Stuart Whitten	Canning Close	17
Hank Berlee	11 Poppet Rd (for all on road)	34	Alan Rope	Sutton Road	30
278 CO-ORDINATE	ED BY SUE GANE:		Ph 6238 3463		
Joan Mason	Bingley Way	45	Margaret Heleimin	Merino Vale Drive	17
Sue Ward	Norton, Bngly to Weeroona	32	Anne Gardner	Weeroona, Norton to Majors	31
Sue Gane	Majors Close	20	David Anderson	Weeroona, Majors to Denley	35
Ned Noel	13 PalerancCn cl+41Advtsrs	55	Penny Evans	Norton, Cmpbell to Bngley	25
Kathy Handel	Yalana West	19	-		
227 CO-ORDINATI	ED BY KERRIE FISHER:		Ph 6238 3489		
Colleen Foster	Joe Rocks to Norton	20			
Deb Gordon	Yalana East	41	Rob Gorham	South End - Clare Valley	38
Cassie Fisher	Clare Lane	11	Axelby Family	North End - Clare Valley	42
Lyle Monetesin	Forrest Road area	60	Bungendore Shop	Bungendore	10
222 CO-ORDINAT	ED BY JOHN VAN DER STRAA	ATEN:	Ph 6238 3590		
Sheryl Barnes	Quinn's Estate / Denley	20	Brian Higgison	Deley/Kestral area	12
Don Malcomson	Macs R Denley to Gum Flat	24	Rhett Cox	Macs Reef /Nwngtn to FdHwy	12
Ann Platts	Denley MacReef to Birchman's	26	Morag&Guy Cotsell	MReef /Newington/Harriot (A)	30
Nora Stewart	Rovere Lane	12	Sandra Favre	MReef /Newington/Harriot (B)	20
Joan Milner	Birriwa Road	30	Ian & Esther Rudd	Mreef/Bankers to Fed Hwy	26
Beth Hope	Gum Flat Lane	6			
191 CO-ORDINATI	ED BY LAURA SNOWDON Ph	6236 9609			
Trevor Kirk	Macs R - Denley to Bung Rd	20	Snowdon Family	Hogan Drive	28
Len Parrish	Summerhill Rd Area	33	Diana+Keith Gascoir	ne Snow Gum Road	23
Sue Gorham	Schofields/Brooks/Millyn	25	Thelma Martin	Shinglehouse Rd area	20
Sue Aunella	Brooks	17	Judith Miller	Wyoming and Doust Rds	25
TOTAL FOR WH	HISPER 1074				

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Mobile:	0409 224 901	
Fax:	(02) 6238 3165	

TELSTRA AND WAMBOIN - AGAIN!

by John van der Straaten, WCA Secretary

The interaction between Telstra Country Wide and the Wamboin Community Association has gained momentum. Following the Telstra presentation at the last WCA General Meeting, the Telstra Queanbeyan shop and representatives from the central office took a stall at the November WCA Home Produce Market. They were overwhelmed with inquiries and provided our community members with very helpful information and practical assistance in ascertaining the best model of mobile phone for our properties. They were somewhat surprised at the test results at some of the properties and the number of properties at which there was either inadequate or no reception.

My account in the Whisper last month of the Telstra meeting with the WCA contained some inaccuracies which Telstra has asked to be remedied. Accordingly, I have listed some points which Telstra would like to be known to Wamboin residents:

- It is anticipated that a new mobile site in Wamboin will be commissioned by the end of the current financial year. The site is yet to be determined.
- The CDMA network, which works off the 850 frequency (3G850), is scheduled to close on 28 January 2008. While the 2G (GSM/digital) and 3G [2100] networks will still be in operation, these are not recommended for residents of Wamboin.
- CDMA customers who do not upgrade to the Next G network may lose their mobile number permanently.
- Telstra plans that the Next G network will be around for many years and, as technology improves, Telstra will upgrade the Next G network with 4G, 5G and so on.
- While the LG TU550, Telstra 165 and Samsung A142 have the rural blue tick and car kits, the Nokia 6120 provides very good hand held coverage in much of Wamboin. The Nokia, however, has a car cradle, not a car kit.
- CDMA customers should do a 'like for like' upgrade to Next G by ensuring that, if they are using a car kit or external antenna with their CDMA device, they use a car kit or external antenna with their new Next G device.
- Customers who upgrade from CDMA post-paid to Next G on a \$20 or above Telstra Phone Plan for 24 months will receive \$100 credit on their bill if they choose the Telstra 165 or Telstra 158 before 30/11/2007. This credit will appear by their third bill.

We understand that Telstra intends to have a stall again at the December Market and will demonstrate additional equipment, eg different external antennae and car kits.



Café Wamboin

RESULTS FROM THE 22nd WAMBOIN OPEN GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS -NOVEMBER 2007

The 22nd Wamboin Open Golf Championships were held on Sunday 4th November. The Championship was sponsored by the Wamboin Golf Club with the trophies well worth winning. I would like to thank Joan Mason for the preparation of the after game snacks (as usual) and also thank all those who looked after the course and greens each month throughout the year.

Scores this year were higher on average due mainly to the unfamiliar damp and soft conditions on the course. Heavy rain on the preceding Saturday night took its toll on the greens but never the less the course was in good condition.

After dispensing with the usual dummy spit and googly ball fun awards and then the First Timer trophy-Farah Shepherd, Old Timer trophy - Ron Shepherd and Encouragement trophy - Cassandra Fisher, we got down to the serious award winners. Long drive and nearest the pin winners were; John Whitney, Tony Fisher x3, Dave Hubbard, Tim Barter, Rob Gorham, Jack Whitney and Nev Schroder. Wamboin Junior Champion is Vincent Gorham. Eclectic trophy for the best scores on 18 holes over 12 months was won by Len Ivey. Nine hole championship was won by Lofty Mason (ocb) from Allen Schroder second. B Grade Club Champion (Net) is Paul Griffin from Tony Fisher in second position. A Grade Club Champion (Net) is Charles Guscott from Dave Hubbard in second. Ladies Open Champion for 2007 is Joanne Argaet and,

Wamboin Men's Open Champion for 2007 is Len Ivey (ocb). -- Peter Greenwood Golf enquiries 6238 3358

WAMBOIN CHRISTMAS MARKET

Saturday 15 December 2007 9-12.00

Community Hall, Bingley Way

Local Produce & Plants Crafts Home made goodies

Don't miss out

Meet your friends at the Café

New stallholders welcome. For details contact Tony Power on 6238 3028 or email poweraj@acslink.net.au.

Calling All Writers: We Want Your Stories....

The Bywong and Wamboin Short Story Competition will be on again and will be open for entries in early 2008. This is an opportunity for writers aged 8 to 88 (and beyond) to get writing, incorporating some aspect of Bywong and/ or Wamboin in that writing. Stories will be published in The Whisper and there will also be prizes to be won. Watch the February 2008 Whisper for more details. -- Nora Stewart, On behalf of the judging group

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NEW CLASSIFIEDS
GIANT SHED / GARAGE SALE - Saturday 15 th December. 130 The Forest Road Bywong, 8am to 4pm
Something for everyone, items include Computer equipment, household goods, whitegoods, rolls of material, books, videos /
DVD's, bikes, toys, luggage, farm machinery, tools, trailer, lots of odds & ends and much much more.
For Sale: Rover Rancher Ride-On Mower with Trailer. In good conditon. \$800. Phone 0427 487 098.
For sale: White Brass Single Bed with posturepedic mattress. Pine Bunks (can be configured L shaped or standard) with 1
posturepedic mattress. Single foam mattresses. Ph: 6238 3208
FOR SALE : Front loading washing machine, Ariston AL 1250 CT, AAA Water rating , Washing capacity 5 kg, Drying
capacity 2.5 kg, Rapid wash button, 90 C button, about 7 yrs old , \$199, phone 6238 3059.
Road and Roadside Drains Cleaned and Re-Graded Plus Sprayseal 2 nd Hand Stormwater Pipes Cheap Site Cuts, etc
Local Bloke AH 6238 3090
To give readers a break, by custom, no Whisper edition is printed in January, so the next issue of the Whisper, the February
2008 issue, comes out on the first Saturday of February, 2008.
Need Part-Time Help: The Local Grader Man. Phone / fax 6238 3090
For Sale: Wood Lathe, Durden L500L. Lots of Accessories. \$720.00 Contact Ray on 6238 3047 after 6 pm.
Kate O'Connor (Level 1 EFA/NCAS) riding coach and experienced animal handler is available for general farm and pet care
over the Christmas period. Prices negotiable depending on travel, animal requirements and number of visits required.
Experience caring for horses and foals, cows and calves (including hand milking), dogs, cats and chooks checked, fed and
cared for. Have a relaxed holiday with the peace of mind that your animals are being well looked after by a competent mature
animal lover. References available. To book and discuss your requirements call 0413008824 or 0262383673. If you are
staying home riding lessons are available at your property.
LONG RUNNING CLASSIFIEDS
Recycle your egg cartons & rubber bands. Just drop them off at 413 Norton Road - In the letter box or just inside the gate is fine.
WCA Electronic Noticeboard – Residents are continuing to subscribe to the noticeboard. It is a great way to keep up with issues of
community interest and I encourage everybody to subscribe. To subscribe, simply send an email message (doesn't need any subject or
content) to Wamboin_Noticeboard-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.au.
CHOOKS WANTED – Any age & roosters. Phone Frank on 6297-3523 to arrange collection.
Maths and Science tutoring K-10. Diagnostic testing. Encouraging, expert coaching. Please contact Judy Shellard, [BSc(Hons) Dip Ed],
Phone 62383050
<u>Beekeeping Services</u> Prompt removal of swarm bees and hives that are no longer wanted. Can also remove feral hives depending on
location. Fee charged depending on distance travelled and the type of job required. Happy to discuss your requirements. Award winning
local honey for sale. Wamboin Yellow Box \$8 kg. Available in 1 x kg or 500gram glass jars while stocks last Phone or see us each month at the markets! Call John - Ridgiedidge Apiary 6238 3791. <u>www.ridgiedidge.net.au</u>
For cement rendering, concreting, rock walling or lanscaping phone 0418 621 744 or 6292 7089.
Horse Rug Repairs-prompt, reliable and competitively priced. Urgent repairs possible-drop off in the morning and pick up in the
afternoon.Contact Robyn Slater on 62383472.
Large Holiday house situated in Tuross, 180 degree Ocean views, opposite shops, 2 minute walk to beach, large block for parking, available
now. Discounts apply for Wamboin/Bywong residents. Please phone Cherrie 0418 621 462 for further information.
ADVERTISING RATES: Local classified advertisements are free, as are announcements from community organisations and clubs.
Business advertisements attract a small fee (see below) which is donated to the Wamboin Community Association. Please make your
cheque out to this association, but post it to the editor. Contact editor on 6238-3484 for information. Advertising rates: Full Page - \$100
Half Pg - \$50 1/3 Pg \$35 1/4 Pg - \$30 1/5 Pg - \$25 1/6 Pg - \$20 1/8 Pg - \$15
FOR HIRE from the Wamboin Community Association: GAS BBQ - Party Size, Portable, \$30 (includes gas) together with \$30 cleaning
bond, both payable on collection. Cleaning bond will be refunded if BBQ is returned clean. Enquiries - Joan Mason 62 383 258.
Trestles and chairs are available for hire by local residents. Hire rates are: Trestle \$10ea and chairs \$1.50 ea. Price does not include delivery
or pick-up charges. Available from the Wamboin Community Hall, 112 Bingley Way. Must be returned in clean servicable condition. All
damages are responsibility of the hirer. Equipment must be tied securely on trailer etc. when taken (otherwise they don't go.) Time of pick-up and returned MUST be adhered too (I don't live at the Hall!) -Joan Mason, 62383258.
FOR HIRE: WAMBOIN COMMUNITY HALL. Bookings arranged by Joan Mason 6238 3258.
Local Residents \$70, Bond \$200. Non Resident \$125, Bond \$250. The Hall is not available for teenage or 21st functions.
The Whisper is a community newspaper for Wamboin and Bywong. If you live in the area and have something to say about living here
that is informative, thoughtful or entertaining, think about writing it up for the next issue. For more information contact the editor on 6238-
3484 or email nednoel@optusnet.com.au. And thanks if you have already done so.

News from Sutton School by Jenny Cooper and Gay McNeil

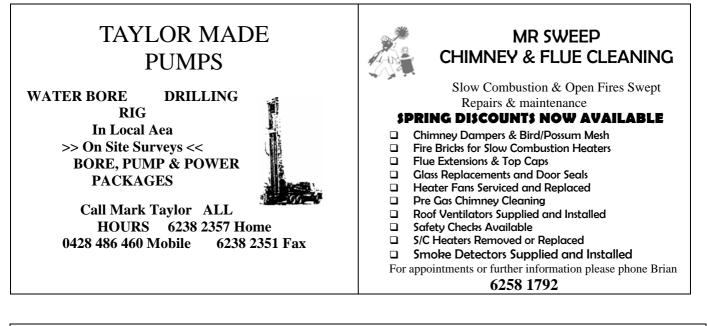
The continuous hard work and positive approach to learning in all classrooms has been reflected in our wonderful results in the Basic Skills Tests this year. Congratulations, especially to those students who showed remarkable growth between their Year 3 and Year 5 scores. Teachers are currently analysing the results to identify students who could benefit from further extension and areas where some students encountered difficulties.

Students and staff came in costume for a fabulous Pirate Day on 8th November. Mrs Birch and the teachers organised a range of curriculum based activities linked to our pirate theme. Children were led in their peer support groups by Year 6 students and rotated through craft, language, maths, computer and drama challenges. The day culminated in a treasure hunt, a fitting welcome to our pirate ship.

Kindergarten and Year 1 had a great day at Questacon on 15th November. The excursion was planned to support our science unit on Moving Toys but also gave the children the opportunity to explore the interesting learning opportunities that Questacon galleries provide. Max Gambale, an ex-Sutton student, enthralled our students with his workshop presentation on space exploration and the development of rockets and spaceships.

This year our swimming program has changed and will involve students in Kindergarten to Year 2. They have the opportunity of daily morning lessons over two weeks at Dickson pool. Thanks to the parents who are coming to assist both on the bus and in the change rooms.

A delegation of foreign government officials visited Sutton School on 24th November to observe residents voting in the Federal election and learn about our electoral system. I received many complimentary comments about our wonderful facilities and beautiful grounds. Many ex-Sutton students and families also had a chance to see the many changes that have occurred since they last voted. If you missed out then come on Monday 17th December to our Presentation Ceremony at 10am or Paradise Island play at 12 midday.



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WILDCARE RELOCATES.....

by Phil Machin

Wildcare does great things in responding to people's requests for help and rescuing injured and orphaned wildlife, but other services, such as simply relocating animals that may be in the wrong place doesn't always spring to mind. A great example arose recently where a new family moved into their new rurally located house only to find their dogs took a fancy to



the resident Shingleback lizard family. Being a wildlife lover the family rescued a Shingleback from their dog and with the advice from *Wildcare* that Shingleback's can mate for life, it wasn't too long before a second lizard was picked up. Both these lizards were collected by *Wildcare* and released in a safer area. As it happened, a third Shingleback has been collected and now we are waiting for the telephone call to pick up its mate too.

It's really encouraging to see people going out of their way to notice and care for the wildlife in our area. In this case the owner's dogs were under control in their backyard, but there was a need to sort out the local wildlife inhabitants and make them safer.

As Lesley of *Wildcare* says "Shinglebacks have a skin that looks like the old fashion shingle roof, hence their name. They are lovely creatures and have

a tail which has a similar look in size and shape to their head. This is a natural defence mechanism. It's great that a property owner had the forethought to contact *Wildcare* t to relocate these animals and it's indicative of the way in which the majority of people support our wildlife. They like to bask on the road and are slow moving so watch out."

If you are interested in becoming involved with *Wildcare*, ring (02) 62991966 or check out the *Wildcare* website <u>www.Wildcare.com.au</u>. And again, keep up the good work! *Photo: Shingleback Lizard*



Thanks for the thanks.....

"I wish to tell you how much I appreciated the competence, professionalism, and friendliness of all of you in the sale of "Glen Tan". You brought the transaction off quickly and smoothly and at all times helpfully".

Ken

"Thank you for all the effort in selling our house. You were a pleasure to deal with".

Katrina and Richard

"We just want to say thank you to all of you for your help and assistance in the sale of our house at Gundaroo. Especially since we are so far away, it's all gone so smoothly"

Greg and Cheryl

"Our thanks for your tremendous assistance in the sale of Shepherd Rd. We really appreciate your friendly and professional approach".

Jane and Ian

"Thanks for your promptness. It was a pleasure doing business with you and your team. See you next year when we visit".

Sarah

"Many thanks for your kind and selfless efforts in relation to the sale of our property. We greatly appreciate the integrity displayed by your team in your dealings with us. We are pleased we engaged a local agent with the flexibility to cater for our particular circumstances. We would have no hesitation in recommending Sutton Real Estate to anyone".

Bill and Sally

With over \$32 million in sales in the 10 months to October, Sutton Real Estate would like to thank you, our community, for your support. We're proud to be a regional business employing eight locals. We wish everybody a safe and happy Christmas and New Year and we look forward to many more years of providing our service to you.



SUTTON SCHOOL PLAYGROUP

2007 is coming to an end, however Sutton School Playgroup just keeps getting bigger and better. A BIG THANKYOU goes to the Eaglehawk Hotel fundraising committee and owners, Jenny and Mark Everson who funded the cost of our beautiful new outdoor shed. Now we can store our trikes safely and don't have to carry bulky items up and down the stairs in the school hall. Thankyou also to the playgroup parents who were able to assist with the slab pouring and putting up the shed itself.

We have up to 20 families coming each Thursday to play and spend time with their children and friends. This term we have done painting, participated in fabulous music sessions each week and made badges. We are looking forward to Christmas celebrations and the strong posibility that Santa Clause himself might make an apparence at our Christmas party in December. We have a large group of children who will be heading off to kindy next year and Playgroup sends them all good wishes for the year ahead.

Sutton School Playgroup meets Thursday mornings 9:30 - 11:30 ish during school term, all welcome. contact Laura Taylor 6236 9662.

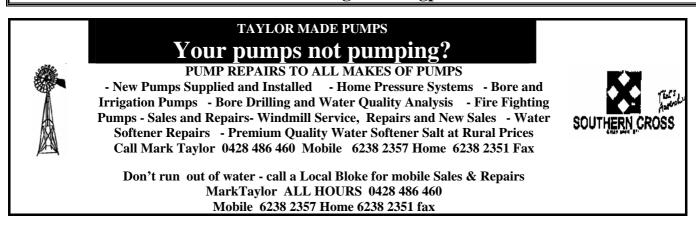
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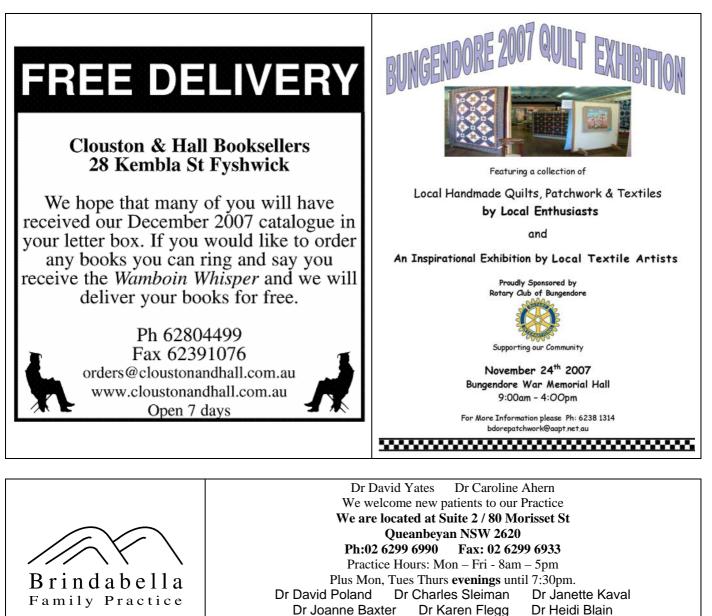


WWoWs Whispers!! by Claire Ayling

The group has been actively preparing for the festive season - we have made wonderful Japanese inspired decorations and most of us even completed them (I wonder how many beaded balls are still in the UFO piles!!). We are also in the process of making aprons for both the Wamboin and Sutton Busfhire Brigades support crews so their uniforms may have some protection. After much deliberation we have chosen a very utilitarian navy blue with yellow ties - we were thinking of pink polka dots but......

On Sunday 9 December the group plus partners are celebrating the season with lunch and beverages at the church begining at midday, and on Monday 17 we meet for the last time this year for a mystery morning complete with the 'Claire's Challenge' - this was a project where I gave everyone a bag filled with mystery items and 3 months later a finished project should eventuate - only limited by imaginations!!

Next year will begin on Monday 7 January. Our plans for the year include 12 guest speakers, 12 projects, a number of charity activities and much more friendship and laughter. The walking group continues to meet on Mondays and Fridays and we are also hoping to start a Tai Chi class in February. New members are warmly welcomed and any further information can be obtained from Claire Ayling on 62383347.



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Notes from St Andrews

by Claire Ayling

How wonderful the rain has been - the church and grounds are looking magnificent in time for the most important time in our Church calendar. On the 2nd December St Andrews celebrates it's birthday or patronal festival. The service begins at 5pm and following this the congregation and guests are celebrating the occasion at Goolabri. Holy Communion will be held on the third Sunday of the month which is 16th December at 9am. WANTED SHEPHERDS, ANGELS AND OTHER WILLING CAST MEMBERS - ALSO ANY VISITORS WISHING TO JOIN US

Our Christmas service will be on Christmas Eve. Our traditional Nativity will begin at 7.30 in the church grounds with the lych gate making a wonderful stable. This year we will have the cast including donkeys, sheep and hopefully alpacas, and we are hoping that any children who come along may wish to join the cast as shepherds, angels, (costumes minimal!!) or maybe even other animals - who can forget the little pig last year! No rehearsals are necessary and we hope the nativity will provide insight for all into the true meaning of Christmas. The Nativity is followed by a service of Holy Communion at 8pm. As this is the last Whisper of the year a reminder that the services for January will be Matins on January 6 and Holy Communion on Sunday 20 January both beginning at 9am.

For all queries regarding the chuch or services please phone Robyn Robertson on 62383202, and any queries reagrding the Nativity please call Claire Ayling on 62383347.





Canberra Equine Hospital is located on the corner of the Federal and Barton H'way, Lyneham.

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02 6241 8888





St. John's Wort (Hypericum perforatum)

Article Sent and Requested to Run by Karen Welsh, Executive Assistant to the General Manager, Palerang Council

Description: Mature plants have a central woody crown. In late autumn, winter and early spring, horizontal pale green or reddish stems with bright green, elongated leaves grow from the crown to form a rosette. Single or multiple upright flowering stems are produced from this crown in spring. Clusters of bright yellow flowers 1-2cm in diameter, with 5 petals, develop in the summer. Flowering is followed by the formation of reddish-brown seed capsules that contain small black seeds approximately 1mm long. Seeds fall from the capsules in autumn.

St. John's Wort reproduces from seed or suckering. A single plant can produce up to 30,000 seeds annually. Fresh seeds are dormant for 4-6 months before they can germinate, but remain viable in the soil for as long as 12 years. Seedlings grow slowly, and are susceptible to drought and plant competition. In an average year, very few seedlings survive to maturity. Favourable years in which there is massive establishment can occur periodically. Once established spread of individual plants occurs primarily through suckering.



How it spreads: The sticky fruits can adhere to the coats or hair of animals and this is the major method of long distance dispersal. Machinery movement and contaminated fodder can also spread the seeds. Seed is not transported far by wind (less than 10 metres per year). An individual plant may spread concentrically (at a rate of 30 centimetres per year) by shooting ("suckering") from lateral roots.

Health risks and other undesirable traits: St John's Wort contains the alkaloid hypericin, which causes photosensitisation in mammals which ingest it, resulting in blisters on weakly pigmented parts of exposed skin. Sensitivity varies between animal species and between breeds of domestic stock. Cattle are highly sensitive to hypericin poisoning. Mature goats have tolerance. Black-faced meat sheep are more tolerant than whitefaced wool sheep and some bloodlines of merinos are more sensitive than others to hypericin poisoning. Native animals are not known to be affected. All of the adverse clinical reactions of sheep that have consumed St John's Wort appear to depend upon the activation of hypericin in their bodies by bright sunlight. Recently shorn sheep grazing during fine weather are thus at higher risk. The level of hypericin is higher in the narrow-leaf than the broad-

leaf form, and changes throughout the year. hypericin levels start to rise rapidly in spring when the new shoots reach a height of 5-10 cm and are greatest in early summer when plants are in full flower. hypericin content of narrow-leaf forms is approximately twice that of broad-leaf forms in late winter and early summer.

Control: From October to end of April, spot spray or boom spray by the use of a registered herbicide. Other Control: Sow a strong competitive pasture; graze; use biological control methods or chip out the whole plant. For further information please contact Council on 1300 735 025.

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BUNGENDORE SES by Jan Smith, Community Liason Officer

On the evening of Sunday the 18th November, when most of us were thinking about going to bed, members of the Bungendore SES were driving to the Bungendore Emergency Services Centre (BESC), to respond to a request for assistance, following a report of flooding along the Tarago road. In this case the flooding had subsided, leaving damage to the road, but

required no further assistance by the unit. More generally the Bungendore SES unit provides assistance to the local community in the Bungendore, Wamboin and Bywong areas in the event of storms and flooding. Assistance includes help with temporary repairs to save lives, prevent injuries, preserve property and prevent further damage. Members can also assist by providing advice on prevention measures. The unit also assists other emergency services, such as the Rural Fire Service and the Police, and also involved in community activities and render assistance to other community organisations.

The Bungendore SES welcomes new members. Membership gives you the chance to assist your community in times of need. We have a need for people with a wide range of skills and abilities. Roles range from providing assistance in the field during storm operations, assistance with communications and operations control in the operations centre, assistance with providing welfare, and catering and logistical support. We can use almost any willing volunteer, regardless of current skill



level, age or fitness. The unit need fit able bodied members to undertake activity in the field, while people who are less fit or who may have disabilities can be utilised in a range of activities in the operations centre.

The Bungendore SES offers a range of nationally accredited training in areas such as first aid, general rescue, storm damage operations, land search, chainsaw operations and more. The unit also offers the opportunity to meet new people (in the unit and from other SES units) and to become engaged in different and challenging activities.

A public meeting for anyone interested in becoming a member of the SES will be held Thursday 7 February 2008 at 19:30 at the BESC, Cnr Malbon/King Street, Bungendore. The training programme for new recruits will be available at this meeting. The program will run over 6 months so that, by August 2008, induction, first aid, general rescue and storm

and water damage courses will be completed. Training is held on the first Monday and third Thursday of each month at 7.30pm at the BESC and may include some weekends. Further information may be obtained from Colin Brown, the Controller, on 0408 848 693, or Jan Smith, Community Liaison Officer, on 02 6238 0106.

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Wamboin Guides

Past and Present Guides / Leaders are invited to join us for a get together to celebrate our 21st Birthday **When:** Tuesday 4th December **Where:** Community Hall, Birriwa Rd, Bywong **Time:** 6:30 pm till 8 pm **Urgent:** For Wamboin guides to continue we need leaders, know anyone that may be interested ? (Any questions please contact Judi An - 6236 9514)

Wamboin 15 Years Ago Prepared by Robyn Robertson There were no significant reports in the Whisper of January, 1993.



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Gearys Gap/Wamboin Landcare Group

by Chris Fowler

Local residents and landholders interested in the planting and propagation of native trees and shrubs. Activities include monthly meetings, propagation sessions, nursery work, and tree and shrub plantings on public and private land in the area.

Propagation session: Saturday 1st December 2007 - between 9am and 11am. These are held at Geoff Butler's place at 38 Birchmans Grove, Wamboin. New participants are very welcome at these sessions, which aim to be both educative and fun. For more information, please email Geoff at gbu22182@bigpond.net.au, phone him on 62369158, or contact the Secretary. At the time of writing, no more sessions are planned for this year, but the cuttings situation will be reviewed in the next couple of weeks, and a quick 'call to pots' might eventuate.

Monthly Meeting: The November monthly meeting was well attended and enlightening for all. Roger Good inadvertently found himself the centre of attention, but members benefited greatly from his extensive knowledge and years of experience, and we thank him again for that. It is likely that at similar future meetings, members will be encouraged to individually relate their own knowledge of the specimens they have collected, or at least explain from where they were selected and in what circumstances. The next monthly meeting should be the second Monday in February 2008

Future Activities: At the November meeting, Roger introduced what we hope will be a welcome discussion by members, of what they expect from the Group's activities at least in the coming year. Please give this your serious consideration. Groups such as ours, can occasionally have a tendency to lose purpose or direction without members realising that it is happening and some form of revitalisation is useful. There will be a committee meeting early in the New Year, and the committee would hope to be able to discuss your suggestions and ideas at that time. Please take the opportunity to talk to committee members, or ring or e-mail your thoughts to Roger, Geoff or the Secretary.

Xmas drinks: All members are invited to attend the Bywong Community Association Christmas gathering at the Community Hall on Birriwa Road, Saturday, Dec 8, 6 pm to 8 pm. This is always a pleasant evening and all members are encouraged to attend.

- Chris Fowler, Secretary, Ph: 62369189

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A newsletter from YOUR volunteer rural fire brigade compiled by Cliff Spong with help from many members of the Brigade

THE FIRE SEASON HAS NOW STARTED. NO FIRE PERMITS WILL BE ISSUED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. THIS MEANS NO BURNING OFF IN THE OPEN WILL BE PERMITTED UNTIL FIRE PERMITS CAN BE ISSUED. **RING 000 (Zero-Zero) TO REPORT FIRES OR SMOKE SIGHTINGS.**

From the Captain's Desk



As the old storyteller once said, "Do you want the good news or the other sort?" This month's report is a bit like that. The good news is being able to let you know about the successful efforts of the Wamboin NAVEX team following a challenging weekend of some very excellent adventures. The weekend was packed full of realistic training incidents which tested all teams and brought out many until now, hidden talents and appreciation for the work we do. As well as the official "stuff" it is pleasing to report that everyone also enjoyed themselves! These training exercises have always proved to be a really worthwhile experience for everyone involved, even in the early stages of their volunteering careers. The picture below shows, from left to right in the back row, Andrew Dunn, Darrol Dykes, Nick Hunter, Jake Blight, Adrienne McKenzie, John McGrath, Keith Wrench, Darrell Tipton, Matt O'Brien and Ian Coillet. Craig Small, Roberta Molson and Beth Wrench are in the front row. Even after their big weekend it wasn't difficult for them to raise a

smile for the camera.

The next piece of good news is that we will be having our annual Christmas party at the fireshed on Tuesday the 4th of December. I have contacted the management team at the North Pole and it is very likely that the big bloke with the white beard and red outfit will be making an appearance just after 6pm. It is an opportunity for everyone associated with the Brigade to come along to help us mark another successful year. Everyone in our area is more than welcome to come along and meet the people who are committed to providing this important community service.

The other sort of news concerns some of the incidents your brigade has been involved in during the past few weeks. As the pictures show, the more notable incidents have involved motor vehicles. People are either experimenting with



novel ways of taking corners (luckily no significant injuries resulted) or else demonstrating a complete lack of respect for the law or the community in stealing and torching vehicles.

Another incident is worth bringing to your attention. Quite recently we responded to an early morning call where it was believed a power line had dropped onto a fence after a minor explosion in the transformer on a power pole. Luckily for everyone in the house the report of the incident received by your brigade did not accurately portray the minor nature of the problem. The power cable had not come down and no significant fire threat was evident. Even though it appeared to be slightly embarrassing to call the fire brigade when nothing major had really happened, the residents did do the right thing and called 000, just to be sure. Until the Country Energy technicians arrived to carry out the necessary repairs a fire brigade crew and tanker remained on the scene just to be sure.

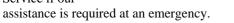
As part of the series where we have been including information from the Rural Fire Service website focused on our local communities, this month I have included some information about calling for help. You may think that this may not be necessary, but I can assure you that there is not a broad understanding of what it takes to have emergency services agencies respond when and where you need them. With the predominance of overseas produced television programs and movies, for example, some people may be getting the wrong messages.

The quickest way to get the right help for an emergency situation, in rural and urban areas is to ring the '000' (triple zero) emergency number. This number is first answered by Telstra with the question, "which service do you require, Police, Fire or Ambulance?" You will then be connected to an emergency service operator, who will take your details. Stay on the line and give the operator the details of where you are including street number, name, nearest cross street, and locality.

In rural areas it is important to give the full address and distances from landmarks and roads, not just the name of the property. Don't hang up until the operator has all the information they need. In the case of a fire or an incident requiring a fire service, the call is put through to one of 4 Control Centres run by NSW Fire Brigades. These Control Centres have direct lines, not only to their own stations, but to the 140 Rural Fire Service Districts across NSW as well.

- In an emergency fire situation **DO NOT** call:
- a NSW Rural Fire Service district office
- a Fire Control Centre
- a rural fire brigade
- volunteer members.
- 911 (for the United States of America and Canada Only) This

action could lead to a delayed response or inappropriate resource being sent. Please use the '000' (triple zero) number to contact the Rural Fire Service if our



Things everyone should know and do:

- take time to teach children and overseas visitors how to make an
- emergency call
- if a person unable to speak English calls '000' they just need to say "fire" and leave the phone off the hook. The call will be recorded and traced, and a fire engine will be sent to that address
- leave the '000' emergency number by the phone
- for callers with hearing or speech impairments, call '106' (one zero six) using a textphone
- '000' (triple zero) calls are free.

On behalf of your brigade I would like to sincerely wish everyone in our great community a relaxing, harmonious, memorable and safe festive season. Your continual help and assistance remains a constant source of pride for all the volunteers. I would also like to send my sincere thanks and appreciation to all the volunteers, their families and supporters for yet another year of dedication, hard work and timely doses of patience and understanding. The Wamboin brigade and its justifiably high reputation is a credit to all of you.

Finally, if you need any advice about fire protection around your property please call 0409 991 340.

THE CAPTAIN'S LIST	Businesses supporting the Wamboin Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade	
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AAA Water Carriers	Cross Country Construction	Ratz Mobile Welding
Anytime Backhoe Hire	Eureka Plants Pty Ltd	So Good Sausages Pty Ltd
B & B Tree Surgery	Horizon Real Estate	Sotech Pty Ltd
Bingley Contractors (Water Carriers)	FH Office Services	Shepherds Run Wines
Bungendore Rural	France Harrison & Associates	Sherrin Hire
Bungendore Taxi Service	Gidgee Estate Winery	Sutton Real Estate
Capital Business Services	Inland Trading Co (Aust)	Tipton Shopfitters Pty Ltd
Capital Stainless Steel	Lambert Vineyards	Trevor Barker & Associates
Clare Valley Tree Services	LMS Consulting	Trevor Duncan Homes
Coates Hire, Fyshwick	Manuka Childcare Centre	Wagonga Coffee
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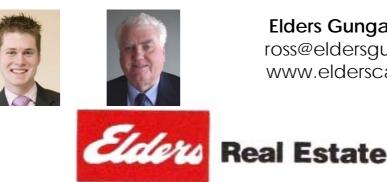


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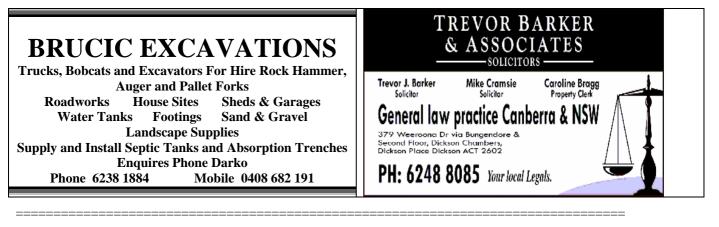
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Rainfall and Temperatures in Wamboin

32 Year Statistics from the Robertsons

November Rainfall to 25/11 – 80 mm 2007 Rainfall to 25/11 – 496.5 mm December average – 56.5 mm Hottest December Day – 37 c on 21/12/99 Coldest December night -- 3 c on 9/12/99 Wettest December Day -- 164 mmm in 1988 Coldest January Day -- 17 c on 6/1/06 & 19/1/06 Driest January - 6 mm in 1979 November 2006 – 43 mm 2006 Rainfall – 442.5 mm January Avrage 62.6 mm Coldest December Day -- 13 c on 13/12/87 Driest December Day -- 0 mm in 1979 Wettest January Day 39 c on 3/1/90 & 19/1/98 Coldest January Night -- 7 c on 2/1/03 Wettest January -- 197.5 mm in 1995



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Charity Begins At Home By Lydia Teodorowych Publicity Officer Lake George Day VIEW Club

As Dorothea MacKellar wrote in 1906:

I love a sunburnt country, A land of sweeping plains, Of ragged mountain ranges, Of drought and flooding rains

We here in Australia, throughout decades have endured "the drought" which has touched the heart of our country and our farmers in particular. Who finds it more difficult than the woman who tries to make ends meet while helping with the running of a farming property during times of drought.

VIEW Clubs are made up of women from many different backgrounds who want to further the "Voice, Interests and Education of Women (VIEW)". Zone AA03 Clubs in Braidwood, Bungendore, Crookwell, Goulburn, Lake George and Queanbeyan wanted to show their country sisters they care by helping women on farms who are doing it hard. Women are the backbone of many families and put their family before their own needs. During times of drought it is the woman of many a rural household who is struggling to raise the family, clothe, feed and educate them as well as support their husband and work long hours on the farm. Hence through the initiative of Zone Councillor Fiona Spottiswood and Club Delegates the "VIEW Drought Project" was created.



Project" BBQ on Lake George



Members of the Lake George Day VIEW Club and Bungendore Evening VIEW Club

During 2007 VIEW Clubs in Zone AA03 were asked to collect items to donate for Drought Packs to distribute to country women in our immediate local communities.

Zone Councillor Fiona said "Country VIEW women care about other country women! VIEW women can bring a little sunshine and hope into the lives of disadvantaged country women who are suffering from the long term effects of drought conditions in our local communities by providing them with much needed necessity items such as shampoos, toothbrushes, hand cream, soap, deodorant, first aid kits, sunscreen etc."

Country members of VIEW Club's gathered together in friendship to enjoy a BBQ on Lake George and to pack thousand's of items for the Drought Packs.

Zone Councillor Fiona congratulated the VIEW Clubs from Lake George, Goulburn, Crookwell, Queanbeyan, Braidwood and Bungendore for their generous donations which abundantly filled endless boxes for distribution to rural women in need of a little helping hand. "VIEW women certainly care and like to share!" Fiona said as was demonstrated by our VIEW city sisters from Woden and Belconnen who also added their generous donations to the Drought Project.

VIEW Clubs always welcome new members. For more information on the VIEW Club or to join a Club near you, please contact Zone Councillor Fiona Spottiswood on 62303336 or President Lake George Day VIEW Club Pauline Segeri on 6238 1996.

Our final Meeting for 2007 will be held on December 11 at 12 noon at Goolabri Country Resort, 202 Goolabri Dr Sutton. Come and enjoy our sharing of Christmas stories, Kris Kringle and Special jewellery made locally by Lina of Zanil Design. For bookings ring Kerry on 6238 0603 by Friday December 7.

Lake George VIEW Club president and committee would like to wish all our members, supporters and community a festive Christmas season and great abundance and joy in the New Year! The VIEW Clubs generally are on holiday over January but from February onwards are in full swing. Ring Pauline to find out more.

visit our blog: http://lgdviewclub.blogspot.com

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Roxane Atkinson is an experienced primary school teacher and a qualified Hatha yoga instructor. She will be holding an open morning at Lilyfield Cottage on:

Date: Saturday, 19th January, 2008.

Tíme: 10:00 a.m. – 11.:30 a.m. Locatíon: 'Lílyfield Cottage' 215 Norton Rd, Wamboín.

Classes begin on Friday 1st and Saturday 2nd February, 2008 and enrolments are now being accepted. (Limited places available).

Come and meet Roxane at the open morning to find out more about her classes or direct your enquiries to: Phone: (02) 6238 3892. Email:lilyfield_yoga@live.com.au.

"Namaste"

Wamboin Muse Jill Gregory

It is never easy getting away from Wamboin. Apart from the chore of packing suitcases, there are the animals and garden to consider; finding holiday homes for an assortment of aged animals, trying to drought proof a sprawling garden and imposing on the goodwill of family and friends to do extra watering and keep a general eye on things. And it was especially hard in early October this year when it looked as if we would skip spring and go straight into summer. But we did get away, and after lengthy delays eventually arrived in Europe, minus our luggage and questioning the wisdom of brand loyalty when it comes to choosing an airline. On day one, without warm woollies and jet lagged, I became acutely aware that although we had arrived behind schedule, we had nevertheless arrived ahead of global warming!

We marvelled at castles perched atop rocky outcrops on river bends, we pressed ourselves against old walls to avoid cars as they rattled past like a charge of roller bladers on the narrow cobbled streets, we coveted the noisy rushing streams and rivers, savoured cold, damp air and skipped over puddles and squelched in the mud like children. But we hardly saw a bird, save for the universal pigeon underclass at railway stations, and a lone, song less blackbird in the fir outside our bedroom window. There were no clear blue skies; just uniform grey and everything viewed as if through a gossamer film. Once I glimpsed the sun but it had gone before I had time to squint. There was the feeling that the day was forever waiting to begin, and then it was evening.

And suddenly we were home, much sooner than we'd planned, and once again unburdened by luggage..... But what a wonderful homecoming. Spring had arrived in our absence. The garden was blooming, the eucalypts had grown new leaves, the sky was wide and blue, and the dawn was filled with birdsong both raucous and sweet. It was good to be home.

I wouldn't live anywhere else



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SHIVER ME TIMBERS!!! by Ian Coillet

Can't recall the date exactly but it was some very short time after pushing the "Go" button to wing last month's STABLE DOOR article for publication. It was nighttime and, I'm sure you'll all remember it – t'was the mother of all sound and light shows. Lightning – there was plenty of that. Some rain, though not enough. No, it was the thunder that had the bride, our two dachshunds, and this little duck's respective breath away. Here we were, all four of us, quaking in our little cocoon and all under the bed covers. At the time, the lightning was so intense and the thunder so loud, I swear, and I did a bit of that too, it was without doubt that the next lightning bolt would spear down and split the house, blow out all windows and/or drill a very large hole in the ground into which we would all disappear. I'm normally no shrinking violet but I gotta say that the few remaining strands of hair on my head were standing pretty erect, something I'm told is usually only ever seen after I've had a couple of ales!

Well, as we know, the storm eventually tracked away to become a few minor flickers and distant rumble.

Next day, the rain gauge showed only a few mls had fallen. Sounded like a lot more. But what followed was the really puzzling part and had me intrigued. A day or so after the storm I was walking the property as is the dogs and my want. By the barbecue, next to the house, was a rather large chunk of irregular shaped timber. "Bloody sulphur cresteds," I thought to myself as I scanned the pergola expecting to see a huge section of wood missing from a beam. "No, can't be – no paint and wrong timber! And, the dogs are not in the habit of bringing timber to the door," I mused. Continuing my stroll around the property adjacent to the Greenway, pieces of wood – large and small, here, there in fact everywhere. "Cuuuuurious!" Over an area of some 60 or 70 metres, chunks of tree. It was then I cast my eye to the Greenway. "Christ!!", I exclaimed. There before me were twisted branches, perhaps even the remains of a tree trunk. Pieces as thick as your leg. Some much bigger. All stripped of bark, naked, and smashed. I began to put the puzzle together.

The storm, the thunder, and the accompanying lightning was real close – in fact, it was right above us. And, I also wasn't far wrong about a lightning bolt splitting the house. Indeed, we were saved that fate but a charge must have blasted a ridgy-didge tree fairly right out of the Greenway. For where the tree had been, there was now a hole some 25cm in diameter and several centimetres deep. Branches and finer debris were scattered everywhere – and I mean everywhere – commonly to a radius of some 40 metres throughout and either side of the Greenway. The explosion had clearly impacted trees in the vicinity for they bore scars all over – no doubt from flying shrapnel. The large piece of wood at the house near the barbecue had travelled an incredible 110 metres. What power it must have been – to blast the wood this distance and even more astonishing that it travelled over a very large shed and our 90,000 litre water tank.

Guess the message here is, when a storm like this approaches, if you are able to, stay inside and shelter well clear of windows, in the strongest part of the house, eg bathroom, or if you are lucky, in your cellar where you can top up your courage levels all you like. Of course, if you are caught outside, find emergency shelter (but not under a tree).

Finally, while on the subject of electricity, I, along with several other members of Wamboin's Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade recently attended a weekend away with 140 or so other Brigade and emergency service personnel in a large navigational exercise (NAVEX 2007) in the neighbouring Mt Fairy/Boro area. Wamboin crews worked their way through eight events including intensive training in orienteering, first aid, navigation, situational assessments, fire investigation and considerable testing of crew communication abilities. At one event, Country Energy hosted an exceptionally well-considered electrical safety exercise. Extremely sobering for all participating crews.

And, lastly, a bit of info I gleaned a while back from a Bureau of Meteorology and Energy Management Australia publication on Severe Storms – Facts, Warnings and Protection. In statistical terms, lightning poses a greater threat to individuals than almost any other natural hazard in Australia, accounting for five to ten lives and well over 100 injuries annually. Of the many lightning strike injuries each year, about 80 are due to people using normal telephones during thunderstorms when the phone system may suddenly become part of a highly charged electrical circuit. Related injuries may include hearing damage, burns, or even electrocution.

"Shiver me timbers", seems the operative term 'cos it's also the end of STABLE DOOR articles for the year. Having been writing articles under the STABLE DOOR banner since December 2001, I feel it's about time, after 6 years of banging on, that I give you all a rest, allow the STABLE DOOR to close and, hopefully, the baton will be picked up by others in the community.

Garden Time

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Nature Notes – November 2007

Jo Walker

At last we've had some really good rainfall – and not a 'dump' but a day or two of steady showers. There were 31 mm in my gauge, not enough to get the creek running but ample to give the grasses a boost. It always amazes me to see how quickly the grasses react to a bit of rain at this time of the year.

The Koel, that large fruit-eating cuckoo with the loud 'coo-wit' call, is back again. It has been turning up regularly now for several years and is an audible reminder that it's time to do something about Christmas cards. I'm not sure if it breeds here. The male has iridescent blue-black plumage and I've seen one once but have never sighted a female (their plumage is very different to the male's, dark brown and spotted with paler colours). However, they are shy and elusive birds and there may be several around in this area.

The little Brown Thornbills that nested in a low shrub in my driveway hatched two babies, and, a couple of weeks ago, were busy for several days feeding the two fluffy fledglings in a bush near the house.

The Hairy Buttons (*Leptorhynchos squamatus*) have been flowering for a while now, but not as prolifically as they usually do. This bright golden-yellow little flower usually grows in swards of *Microlaena stipoides* (Weeping Grass) or *Themeda australis* (Kangaroo Grass) in moist areas. It resembles a small Billy Button, but the flowers are a deeper yellow and are flat-topped rather than globular in shape. Another yellow daisy, *Chrysocephalum apiculatum*, grows in often extensive mats along the local roadsides. It is a grey-leaved, low-growing plant bearing clusters of little yellow buttons. It usually grows to only about 15 cm, but is a suckering species and the larger patches are quite eye-catching. The taller *Chrysocephalum semipapposum* (Clustered Everlasting) – which grows to over 30 cm tall – is also adding a bit of colour to the landscape. This one has thin linear leaves and tight clusters of twenty or more bright yellow button flowers. It's one of the food plants of Key's Matchstick Grasshopper (*Keyacris scurra*), a small, uncommon insect. I found one of them a month or two ago, floating but seemingly dead, in a water-bowl outside. I scooped it out, and after an hour or so it was moving very slightly. By morning, it had fully recovered and was ready for a feed. It had a good meal of Clustered Everlasting and was later released.

I thought I'd discovered another of these little insects last week when something small hopped into the grass in front of my foot. But it turned out to be a little frog that had very recently been just a tadpole – it was the tiniest frog I've ever seen, just a centimetre long!

The lizards are definitely enjoying these warmer days. There was an Eastern Blue-tongued Lizard in the shadehouse recently, searching for slugs amongst the pots, and the family of Cunningham's Skinks are spending a lot of time sunning themselves on their log home. And Shinglebacks seem to be everywhere this year. A few days ago, I saw a very large one down by the creek, nonchalantly munching on its morning salad. As well as leaves, flowers, insects and snails, they also like berries – and, I'm told, are very partial to the occasional strawberry.

